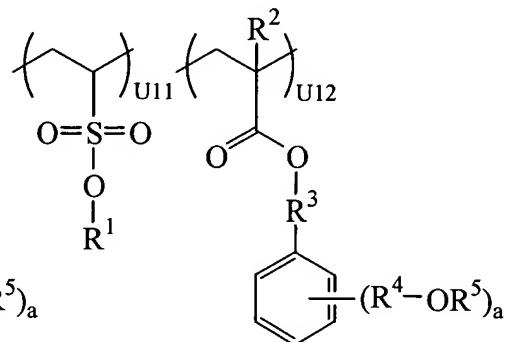
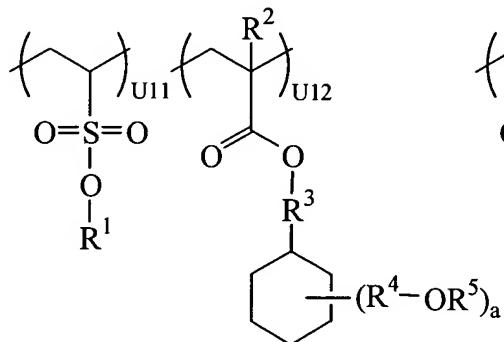


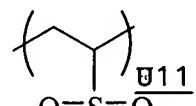
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A polymer comprising recurring units of the following general formula (1a) or (1b) and having a weight average molecular weight of 1,000 to 500,000,

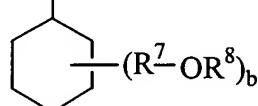


wherein R¹ is ~~an acid labile group, an adhesive group or~~ a straight, branched or cyclic fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydrophilic group such as hydroxyl, R² is hydrogen, fluorine or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R³ and R⁴ each are a single bond or a straight, branched or cyclic alkylene or fluorinated alkylene group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R⁵ is hydrogen or an acid labile group, "a" is 1 or 2, U11 and U12 are numbers satisfying 0 < U11 < 1 and 0 < U12 < 1.

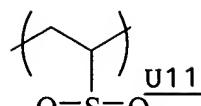
2. (Currently amended) ~~The polymer of claim 1 wherein the sulfonate units included in the formulae (1a) and (1b) are selected from the following general formulae (2a) to (2f): A polymer comprising recurring units of the following general formula (2a) to (2f) and recurring units of the following general formula (1c) or (1c) and having a weight average molecular weight of 1,000 to 500,000.~~



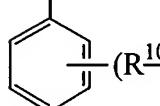
R⁶



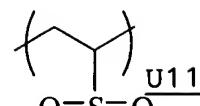
(2a)



R⁹

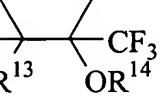


(2b)

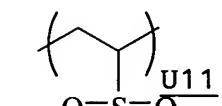


R¹²

R¹³



(2c)



R¹⁵

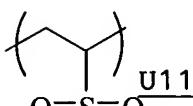
R¹⁶

R¹⁷

R¹⁸

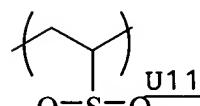
R¹⁹

OR²⁰



R²¹

(2e)

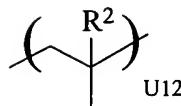


F

F₂C-CF₂

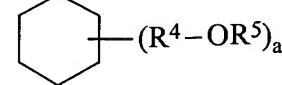
F₂

(2f)

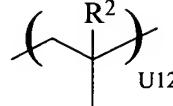


O

R³

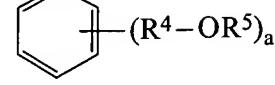


(1c)



O

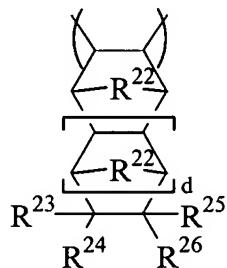
R³



(1d)

wherein R² is hydrogen, fluorine or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R³ and R⁴ each are a single bond or a straight, branched or cyclic alkylene or fluorinated alkylene group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R⁵ is hydrogen or an acid labile group, wherein R⁶, R⁷, R⁹, R¹⁰ and R¹⁷ each are a single bond or a straight, branched or cyclic alkylene or fluorinated alkylene group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R⁸, R¹¹, R¹⁴ and R²⁰ each are hydrogen or an acid labile group, R¹², R¹³, R¹⁵, R¹⁶, R¹⁸ and R¹⁹ each are hydrogen, fluorine or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, at least one of R¹⁸ and R¹⁹ contains at least one fluorine atom, R²¹ is a straight, branched or cyclic fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, "a" is 1 or 2, and each of b and c is 1 or 2, U11 and U12 are numbers satisfying 0 < U11 < 1 and 0 < U12 < 1.

3. (Currently amended) The polymer of claim 1, claim 2, further comprising recurring units of the following general formula (3):

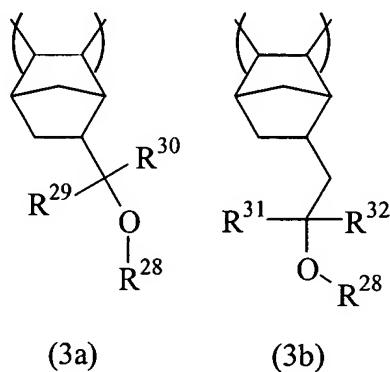


(3)

wherein R²² is a methylene group, oxygen atom or sulfur atom, R²³ to R²⁶ each are hydrogen, fluorine, -R²⁷-OR²⁸, -R²⁷-CO₂R²⁸ or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, at least one of R²³ to R²⁶ contains -R²⁷-OR²⁸ or -R²⁷-CO₂R²⁸, R²⁷ is a

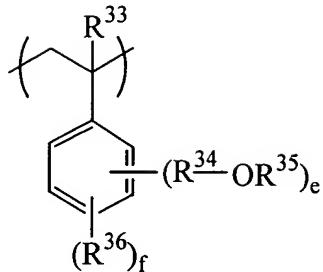
single bond or a straight, branched or cyclic alkylene or fluorinated alkylene group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R²⁸ is hydrogen, an acid labile group, an adhesive group or a straight, branched or cyclic fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydrophilic group such as hydroxyl, and d is 0 or 1.

4. (Original) The polymer of claim 3 wherein said recurring units of formula (3) have a structure of the following general formula (3a) or (3b):



wherein R²⁸ is as defined above, R²⁹ to R³² each are hydrogen, fluorine or an alkyl or fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 4 carbon atoms, at least either one of R²⁹ and R³⁰ contains at least one fluorine atom, and at least either one of R³¹ and R³² contains at least one fluorine atom.

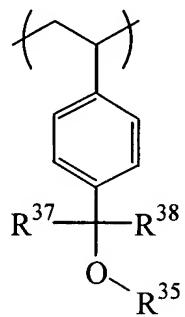
5. (Currently amended) The polymer of claim 1, claim 2, further comprising recurring units of the following general formula (4):



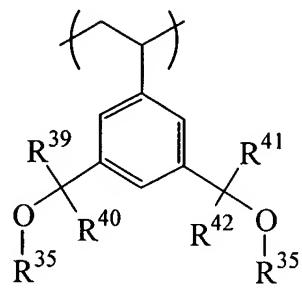
(4)

wherein R³³ is hydrogen, fluorine or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R³⁴ is a single bond or a straight, branched or cyclic alkylene or fluorinated alkylene group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, R³⁵ is hydrogen or an acid labile group, R³⁶ is fluorine or a straight, branched or cyclic fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, e is 1 or 2, and f is an integer of 0 to 4, satisfying 1 ≤ e+f ≤ 5.

6. (Original) The polymer of claim 5 wherein the recurring units of formula (4) have the following formula (4a) or (4b):



(4a)

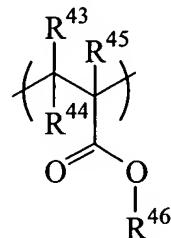


(4b)

wherein R³⁵ is as defined above, R³⁷ to R⁴² each are hydrogen, fluorine or an alkyl or fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 4 carbon atoms, at least either one of R³⁷ and R³⁸ contains at least one

fluorine atom, at least either one of R³⁹ and R⁴⁰ contains at least one fluorine atom, and at least either one of R⁴¹ and R⁴² contains at least one fluorine atom.

7. (Currently amended) The polymer of ~~claim 1~~, claim 2, further comprising recurring units of the following general formula (5):



(5)

wherein R⁴³ to R⁴⁵ each are hydrogen, fluorine or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, and R⁴⁶ is hydrogen, an acid labile group, an adhesive group or a straight, branched or cyclic fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydrophilic group such as hydroxyl.

8. (Original) The polymer of claim 7 wherein R⁴⁵ in formula (5) is trifluoromethyl.

9. (Currently amended) A resist composition comprising the polymer of ~~claim 1~~ claim 2.

10. (Original) A chemically amplified positive resist composition comprising
(A) the polymer of claim 1,

- (B) an organic solvent, and
- (C) a photoacid generator.

11. (Original) The resist composition of claim 10, further comprising (D) a basic compound.

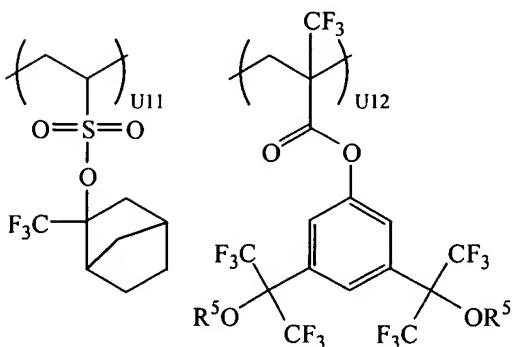
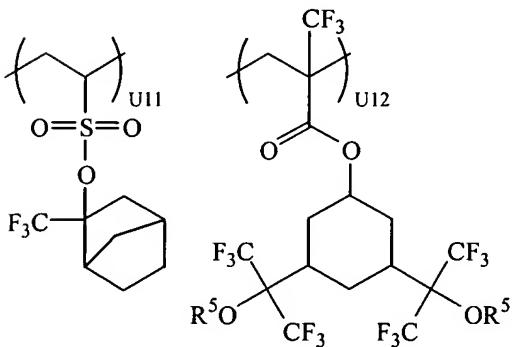
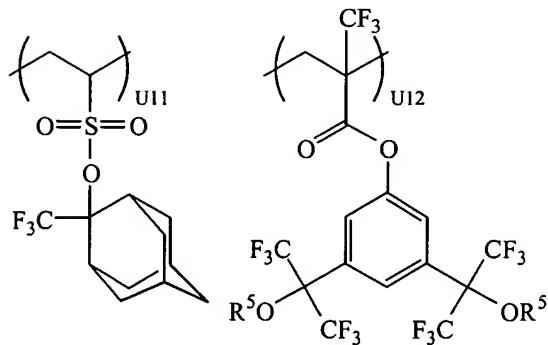
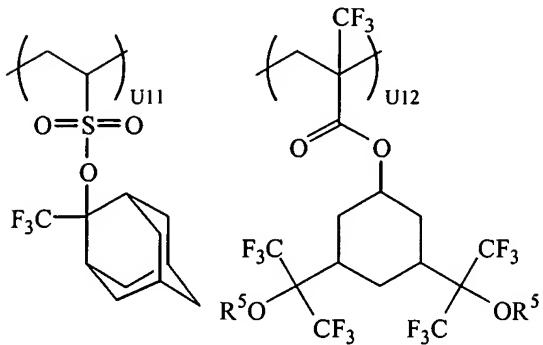
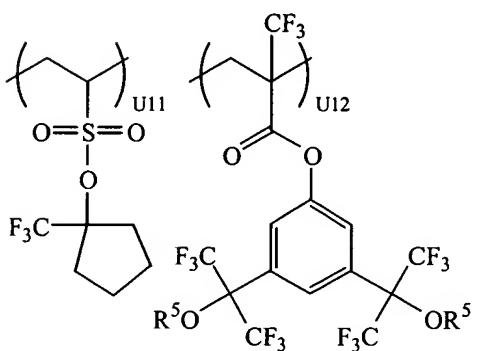
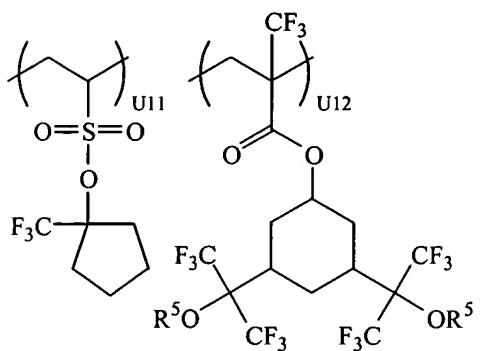
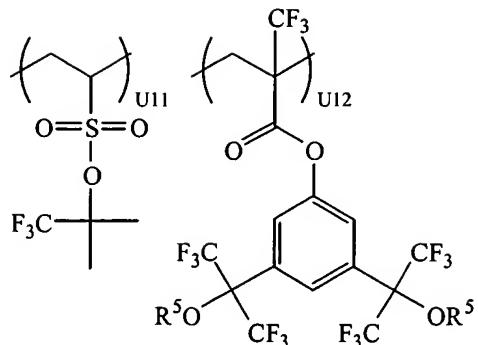
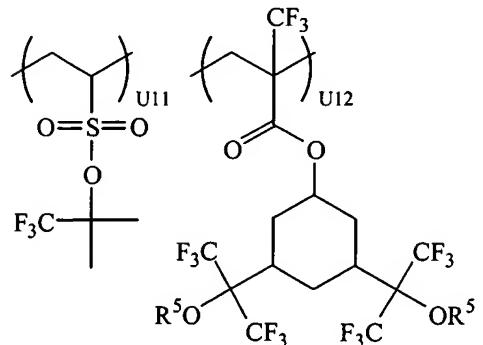
12. (Original) The resist composition of claim 10, further comprising (E) a dissolution inhibitor.

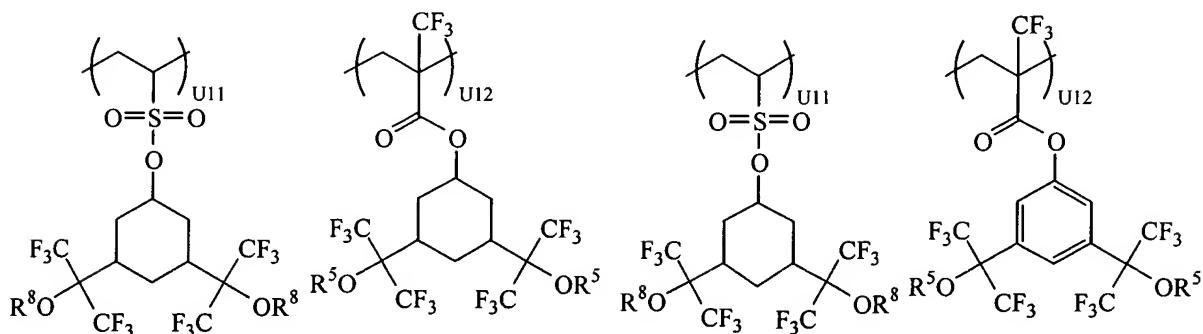
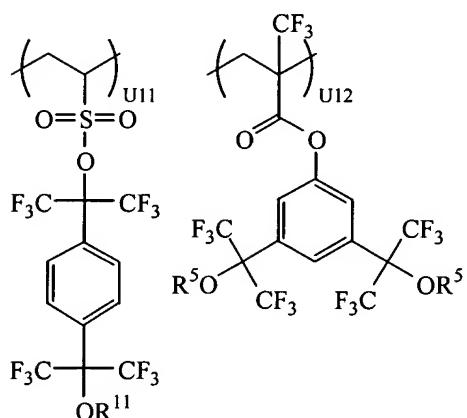
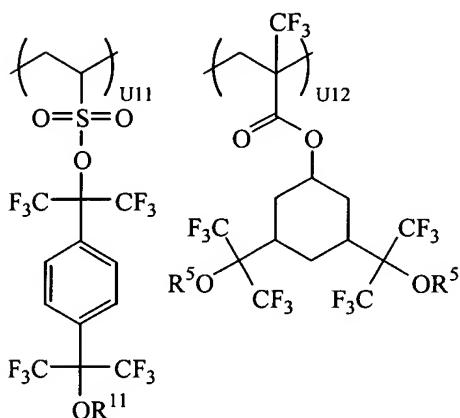
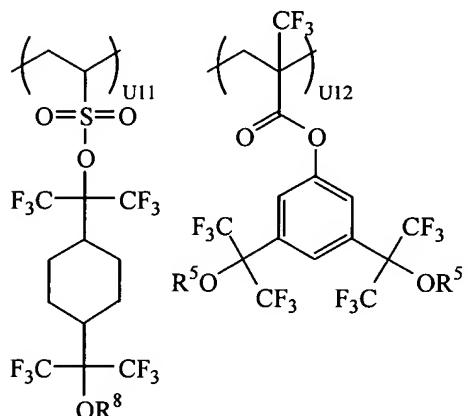
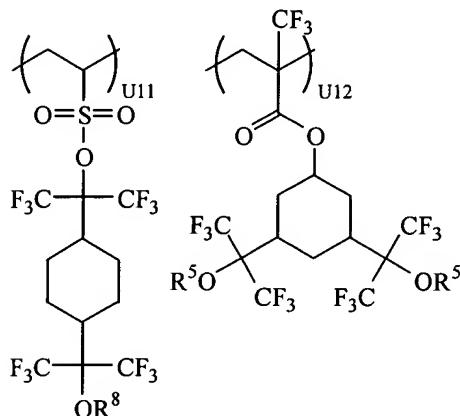
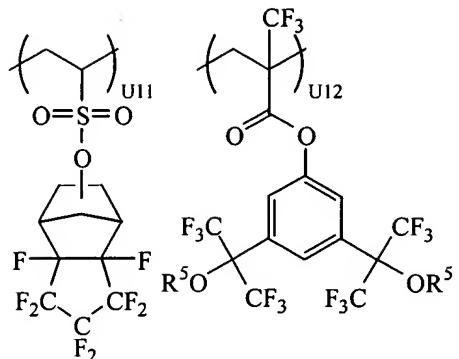
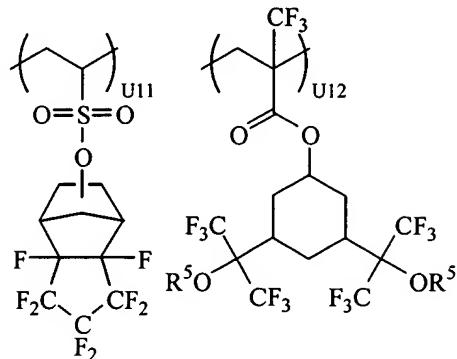
13. (Original) A process for forming a pattern comprising the steps of:

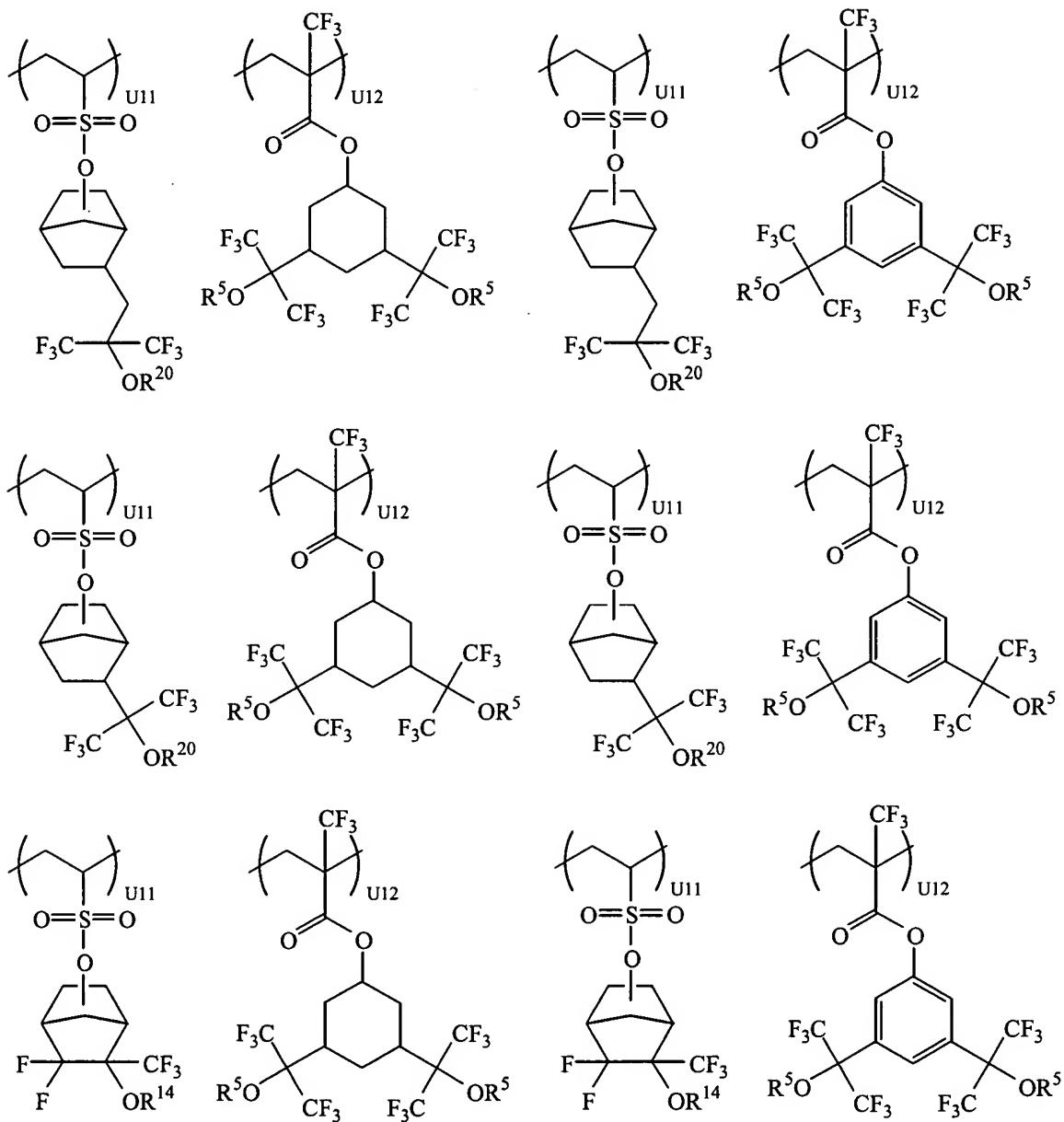
applying the resist composition of claim 9 onto a substrate to form a coating,
heat treating the coating and then exposing it to high-energy radiation in a wavelength
band of 100 to 180 nm or 1 to 30 nm through a photomask, and
optionally heat treating the exposed coating and developing it with a developer.

14. (Original) The pattern forming process of claim 13 wherein the high-energy radiation is an F₂
laser beam, Ar₂ laser beam or soft x-ray.

15. (New) A polymer comprising recurring units selected from the group consisting of the
following general formulae and having a weight average molecular weight of 1,000 to 500,000,

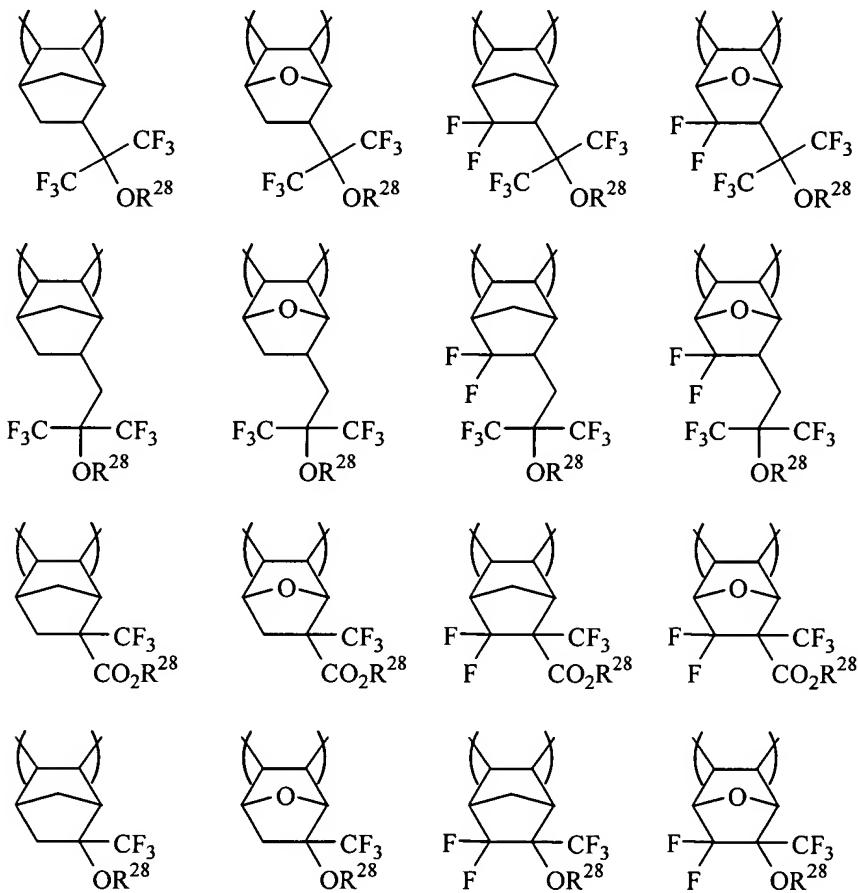






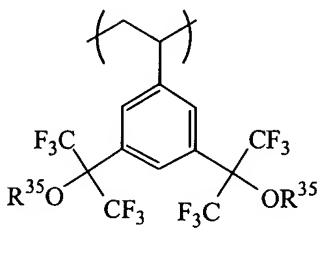
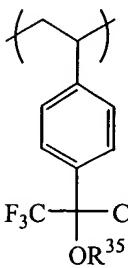
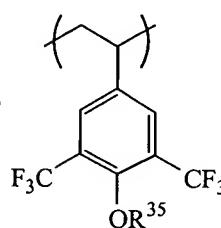
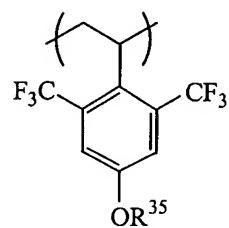
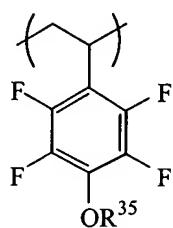
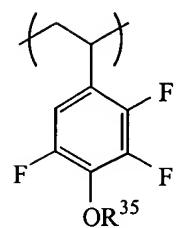
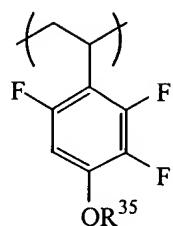
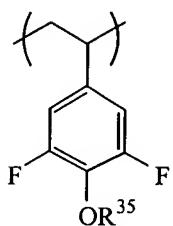
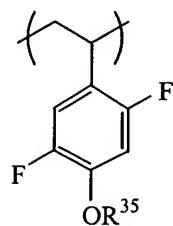
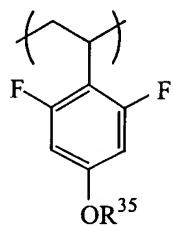
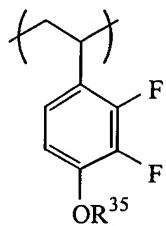
wherein R⁵ is hydrogen or an acid labile group, R⁸, R¹¹ and R²⁰ each are hydrogen or an acid labile group, U11 and U12 are numbers satisfying 0 < U11 < 1 and 0 < U12 < 1.

16. (New) The polymer of claim 15, further comprising recurring units selected from the group consisting of the following formulae:



wherein R^{28} is hydrogen, an acid labile group, an adhesive group or a straight, branched or cyclic fluorinated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydrophobic group such as hydroxyl.

17. (New) The polymer of claim 15, further comprising recurring units selected from the group consisting of the following formulae:



wherein R³⁵ is hydrogen or an acid labile group.